

ACKNOWLEDGE: a Tool to Support Knowledge Capturing

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Abstract

Knowledge management enhances organizational competitive advantages by supporting the capture, maintenance and communication of the business processes knowledge to organization members. ACKNOWLEDGE is a tool that supports tacit and explicit knowledge capturing. Organization members can use this tool to exteriorize knowledge related to organizational processes activities. The acquired knowledge is filtered, packed and stored into the organizational memory in order to be reused by other members during processes activities execution.

1. ACKNOWLEDGE

Organizations must manage knowledge related to their business processes in order to support organizational changes motivated by different factors (such as changes in clients' expectations and development of new technologies (1)). Since business processes knowledge is usually distributed in corporate systems, paper-based documents and in the head of key employees, a systematic process is necessary to capture such knowledge in an effective and efficient way (2).

ACKNOWLEDGE is a tool that supports tacit and explicit knowledge capturing (knowledge acquisition, filtering and packaging) related to the Unit of Cardiology and Cardiovascular Surgery of the Federal University of Bahia (UCCV/FBC) organizational processes. This organization performs activities in health-care, telemedicine, cardiology research and education. The tool has been built to be integrated into two environments: CardioKnowledge, a knowledge management environment constructed to support the UCCV/FBC's processes (health-care, research and business processes), and CORDIS-FBC, an enterprise-oriented medical software development environment tailored for the cardiology domain and the UCCV/FBC (3).

By using ACKNOWLEDGE, UCCV/FBC members can exteriorize their knowledge by describing cases based on their personal experience. Initially, the

member describes a decision making situation related to a process activity. Then, s/he describes her/his decision on such case and justifies it by selecting positive or negative case characteristics that influenced this decision. ACKNOWLEDGE extracts process rules from the whole case description and stores them in a temporary knowledge base to further evaluation. This tool also gives to UCCV/FBC members a non-intrusive way to exteriorize ideas, problems, lessons learned and other kinds of knowledge throughout or at the end of an activity execution.

A committee evaluates the acquired knowledge against a set of criteria in order to identify and filter the relevant knowledge, i.e., that one whose reuse would bring benefits to the organization. Once knowledge has been evaluated, it is packed and linked to pertinent process activities. Finally, the packed knowledge is stored into the organizational memory and its availability is communicated to all potential users which can further consult the captured knowledge.

An experimental study has been planned to evaluate the feasibility, integrity and efficacy characteristics of the knowledge packaging technique used by ACKNOWLEDGE. The benefits expected by the use of this tool are: (i) preservation of the organizational memory avoiding knowledge loss when members leave UCCV/FBC, (ii) organizational process activities execution enhancement, and (iii) facility for new members training.

References

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